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REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CENTRES PARTICIPATING IN THE STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (STPA)

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Sixth Meeting of Directors of Centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) was held from 4 to 8 December 1989 at ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa. It was opened by Mr. N. Tchouta Moussa, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA.

2. Attending the meeting were Directors of the following STPA Centres or their representatives: Centre européen de formation des statisticiens économistes des pays en voie de développement (CESD) Paris; Collège statistique de Dakar, Dakar; Department of Statistics, National University of Lesotho (NUL), Maseru; Department of Statistics, University of Botswana, Gaborone; Department of Statistics, University of Ghana, Legon; Ecole national supérieure de statistique et d'économie appliquée (ENSEA), Abidjan; Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre, (EASTC), Dar es Salaam; Institut de formation et de recherche démographiques (IFORD), Yaoundé; Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE), Makerere University, Kampala; Institut sous-régional de statistique et d'économie appliquée (ISSEA), Yaoundé; Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Legon.

3. Also represented at the Meeting were national statistical training centres: Sao Tome and Principe, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Department of Statistics, University of Addis Ababa, Centre de formation statistique (CFS), Bangui.

4. Representatives from two associate centres of STPA also attended the meeting. They were the International Statistical Programs Center (ISPC), Washington, D.C. and the Munich Centre for Advanced Training in Applied Statistics for Developing Countries, Munich.

5. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Statistical Office, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) were represented.

6. The Directorate General VIII "Development" of the Commission of the European Communities and the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the African Development Bank (ADB), the National Statistical Institute of Portugal (INE) and the World Bank sent Observers to the Meeting.

7. Two consultants who assisted in the preparation of the draft guide syllabuses for middle level personnel in statistics for French- and English-speaking African countries also participated in the meeting at ECA' invitation.

8. The Meeting elected the following officers:

Chairman : Mr. V.E. Muba, Director of the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC), Dar es Salaam

Vice-chairman: Mr. N'Diappe D'Diaye, Director of the Collège Statistique de Dakar

Rapporteur: Mr. Roger Youdje, Senior Lecturer at ISSEA, Yaounde

B. AGENDA

9. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening address

2. Election of officers

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organisational matters

4. Matters arising from the Fifth Meeting of Directors of Centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa.

5. Review of the overall staffing of statistical offices in Africa following the 10 years implementation of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa.

6. Selected issues of relevance to STPA Centres and in-service statistical training programmes or middle-level statistical training centres at national level.

   (a) Improvement of research activities at STPA Centres:

      i) Agricultural statistics
      ii) Other applied statistics
      iii) Theoretical research

   (b) Recent developments in in-service statistical training/middle level training at national level in African countries.

   (c) Problems encountered by STPA centres and national statistical training programmes in the implementation of training projects.

   (d) Proposal on creating and strengthening of a statistics teaching group.

7. Co-operative development of teaching programmes

   (a) Preparation of syllabuses and teaching materials

   (b) Revision of the guide syllabuses for middle level personnel in statistics.

8. Progress in the assistance to Portuguese-speaking African countries in the field of statistical training

9. Technical and financial assistance in the field of statistical training

   (a) United Nations System

   (b) EEC assistance to STPA

   (c) Other bilateral and multilateral agencies and institutions

10. Evaluation of the meeting

11. Any other business

12. Adoption of the report

C. OPENING ADDRESS

10. After welcoming all participants, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA expressed particular gratitute to the presence of representatives of national middle-level statistical training centres who were attending the Meeting for the first time. His thanks went to the various national and international organizations represented at the Meeting, including the National Statistical Institute of Portugal, for the importance they continued to attach to statistical development in Africa.

11. He stated that the mid-term review of Africa's economic performance in 1989 had revealed disturbing trends: the terms of trade had continued to deteriorate, the external debt situation was worsening as its servicing burden continued to grow. The combined effects of those negative trends had slowed down overall growth performance, made it difficult to carry out reforms and adjustment programmes and helped to worsen the social situation and living conditions of African people.

12. The Deputy Executive Secretary also recalled that a number of recovery and development programmes were being implemented in the region. These included the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in June 1986 and the structural adjustment programmes sponsored by the World Bank. At the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1989, the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP) had been adopted. He emphasized the fundamental role of statistical data in monitoring and evaluating those various programmes as well as any development plan.

13. He also indicated that at the first Scientific Conference of the African Statistical Association (AFSA) held in Abuja, Nigeria, last October, the danger of shifting the responsibility for data collection and analysis required for the implementation and monitoring of the programmes mentioned above and for economic management in general from national statistical services to external organizations had been underlined. He therefore urged the Directors of STPA centres as well as the authorities responsible for national statistical training programmes to intensify their efforts, within the STPA programme, in order to produce a sufficient number of the qualified statisticians required by the African region.

14. The Deputy Executive Secretary noted that considerable progress had been achieved by STPA since its inception in 1978 and that the project on Special Assistance to Portuguese-speaking African countries in the field of statistical training was becoming a reality. He was however of the view that much remained to be done. He therefore urged the participants to discuss the main problems which continued to hamper the development of STPA and propose appropriate solutions.

15. Finally, the Deputy Executive Secretary expressed his gratitude to the various national and international institutions and donor agencies which were supporting STPA and hoped that they would continue and further strengthen their assistance. He also thanked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its financial support to the Meeting within the project Statistical Development Programme for Africa (SDPA).

D. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIFTH MEETING OF DIRECTORS OF CENTRES PARTICIPATING IN STPA (Agenda item 4)

16. The secretariat briefly recalled the main issues left outstanding by the fifth Meeting of Directors of STPA Centres. In a working document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/1, the issues had been listed as:

(a) The revision, every five years, of the guide syllabus prepared by ECA, in particular that for the training of middle-level statistical personnel;

b) The provision of high-level expertise to STPA centres with a view to improving post-graduate training and research;

c) The publication of a research digest in the STPA News;

d) The organisation and holding of workshops and seminars by STPA centres;

e) The preparation of some working documents for future meetings of Directors of STPA centres by participants; and

f) The provision of financial support to enable Directors of STPA centres and user countries to attend future meetings;

17. With regard to the first issue, the Meeting was informed that in July and October 1989, the secretariat had taken appropriate action to recruit two consultants to revise the two guide syllabuses for the training of middle-level statistical personnel.

18. As regard the provision of high calibre experts to STPA centres, the secretariat stated that it had addressed the needs for short-term experts to work at STPA centres within the limits of the resources available for that purpose. It was to be hoped that more funds would become available in the future in order to enable STPA centres to be provided with such high-level expertise.

19. In connection with the proposed publication of research digests, the secretariat indicated that such articles had not been included in the STPA News because the centres had not sent that information to ECA. An appeal was made to them to do so.

20. Concerning the organisation and holding of workshops and seminars at STPA centres, the secretariat indicated that ECA had organised during 1988 and 1989 a total of four workshops/seminars in STPA Centres such as ENSEA in Abidjan, RIPS in Legon and IAMSEA in Kigali.

21. The Fifth Meeting had requested that the secretariat should seek financing to support the participation of STPA Directors and user countries in future meetings. The secretariat responded that UNDP had been approached in that regard and had favourably considered the matter in deciding to finance the current meeting. It was to be hoped that the UNDP Bureau for the Arab States would contribute financially towards the participation of North African countries in STPA activities.

D. REVIEW OF THE OVERALL STAFFING OF STATISTICAL OFFICES IN AFRICA FOLLOWING THE 10 YEARS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (Agenda item 5)

22. Under this agenda item, the secretariat introduced document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/2 which reviewed the results of two surveys conducted on the organisation and staffing of statistical services in Africa in 1979 and 1987 and missions organized by ECA in 1988/1989 on assessment of statistical capacity as part of a UNDP/World Bank/ECA project on Data collection related to development programmes and aid flows in Africa. It emerged that of the 22 African countries considered (12 being French-speaking and 10 English-speaking), the staffing in terms of statisticians in the national statistical services had, on the whole increased 75 per cent at the professional level and 62 per cent at the middle-level over the period 1979-1988. The increases had been higher in the English-speaking countries because of the statistical training provided by national universities in those countries. In contrast, the French-speaking countries had specialized schools of a more limited number providing statistical training. The secretariat concluded that considering the fact that the staffing of national statistical and other government services should have increased by about 270 per cent at the senior-level and 120 per cent at the middle-level the objectives set at the time the STPA was instituted had not been attained.

23. The secretariat indicated that among the factors responsible for this situation was the high turnover of statistical personnel in particular those who had left the national statistical services, the recruitment freeze in the civil services of certain countries following the institution of structural adjustment programmes and the poor management of certain national statistical services which had done nothing to promote the development of those services. The secretariat invited participants to make suggestions on the possible contributions of STPA centres and associate centres and national statistical training programmes to improve this situation.

24. During the discussions which followed, several participants felt that the figures given by the secretariat were incomplete as they focused only on national statistical services. A cross-section of the national economies should have been surveyed in order to find out those sectors into which the statisticians had gone. Some participants had the feeling that the STPA had been concerned mainly with the training of statisticians for public administration and that account should have been taken of other sectors. Yet others observed that the countries covered by the ECA study generally had reduced statistical staff and wondered whether those countries were genuinely representative of the African region as a whole.

25. Reacting to these comments, the secretariat indicated that the ECA surveys on the organization and staffing of statistical services in Africa should have covered both the national statistical services and the other government

statistical units. Unfortunately however, information on the latter had been lacking in the questionnaire responses. Furthermore, STPA had been created especially to address the serious shortage of statistical personnel that plagued national statistical services. It was recognized, however, that the Programme should have met the national needs of countries of the region including the needs of the private sector and parastatals. Finally, the secretariat observed that the ECA study had been mainly concerned with trends in the staffing of national statistical services expressed as percentages and that the countries considered reflected the varying situations within the region. However, the secretariat recognized that the figures obtained were of no more than indicative value.

26. Certain participants felt that the shortcomings in training should have been analyzed. Others felt that this problem of inefficiency was relative to the extent that during the evaluation of STPA genuine but somewhat abstract needs had been identified.

27. All participants acknowledged the need to combine efforts in order to secure a more accurate evaluation of STPA performance. To that end, the STPA participating centres should respond comprehensively and timely to the annual surveys organized by ECA on the number of students trained by them per country. The centres should also monitor the whereabouts of their former students. In this connection, the representative of IFORD indicated that his institution had organized in 1981 and 1987 surveys which revealed that IFORD graduates were working in several sectors of economic activity, generally after having begun to work within national statistical services. The representative of CESD described a monitoring exercise undertaken by the centre on its graduates working in sectors outside of public administration. There was also an association of CESD graduates and a directory of former students. This was regularly updated and helped to maintain contact among those students and to monitor their whereabouts.

28. Some participants proposed that statisticians should be encouraged through the granting of performance and technical allowances in order to stem the outflow of statisticians from national statistical services into other sectors.

29. The representative of SOEC informed the meeting that the project for the training of middle-level statistical staff in Zaire had become operational one month earlier.

30. The representative of Sao Tome and Principe proposed that the ECA study should also take into account the Portuguese-speaking African countries. The secretariat recalled that an evaluation of the statistical training needs of that group of countries had been undertaken by ECA and the findings had been submitted to the Fifth Meeting of Directors of STPA Centres. What was more, the Portuguese-speaking African countries had been covered in the evaluation of national statistical capabilities. The results of the evaluation exercise would be presented to the forthcoming session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa from 15 to 20 January 1990.

31. Concluding the discussion on this agenda item, participants agreed that the statistical training being provided within the STPA framework should be continued in light of the current national situation. Special emphasis should be laid on post-graduate and specialized training, including the training of trainers, and middle-level personnel.

F. IMPROVEMENT OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AT STPA CENTRES (Agenda item 6(a)

32. The secretariat introduced the agenda item on the basis of document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/3 titled "Improvement of research activities at STPA centres" by summarising the historical aspects on the discussions concerning research at STPA centres at previous meetings of Directors of STPA centres. The initial discussions at the second meeting of Directors of STPA centres in 1981 and those at the fifth meeting of Directors of STPA centres in 1987 at which the results of the 1987 ECA survey on the status of research activities at STPA centres were presented were specifically mentioned. Suggestions regarding improvement of research at STPA centres as discussed at the 1987 meeting were summarised.

33. The secretariat also discussed issues on the improvement of research activities at STPA centres in the fields of agricultural statistics, other applied statistics and theoretical research. The possible topics for research and experimentation as proposed at the 1986 Commonwealth workshop on Food Supply Information Systems in Africa which was held in New Delhi, India and the priority areas for further research and experimentation as proposed at the 1989 Commonwealth Workshop on Food Supply Information Systems in Africa which was held in Nairobi, Kenya were mentioned. Theoretical research was said to be relatively easier to be undertaken by STPA centres since the funding requirement was minimal when compared to applied research. Issues regarding the promotion and improvement of research at STPA centres were highlighted.

34. In the discussion that followed participants expressed the view that the idea of a digest should be revived by the secretariat and that, at the minimum, abstracts of the papers should be published as part of the STPA news or the Statistical newsletter both of which are published every six months. The secretariat appealed to the STPA centres to send such abstracts to ECA for publication as soon as they are available to enable a wider dissemination. In this connection mention was made by one participant of the African Statistical Association (AFSA) Scientific Journal through which STPA centres could publish their research papers. Some participants felt that international meetings offer an opportunity for exchange of views on research findings, and as such STPA centres should make use of such meetings to the extent possible to discuss their research findings. The Annals of IFORD was also mentioned as a good example of disseminating research findings. A participant raised the issue of a definition of research in view of the fact that other centres could be under reporting their research activities. In response the secretariat defined research in a broad way covering among others the following activities: student projects (sub-degree, degree and post-graduate), teaching staff research (individual, collective), other activities such as consultancies, etc.

48. The representative of the Statistical Office of the European Communities informed the Meeting of the progress made with certain new middle-level statistical training programme projects. She particularly mentioned the national centre of Zaire whose training programme had just begun and the national centre offering regional services at Bissau concerning which arrangements were being made to recruit an expert who would launch the programme. Other projects are being considered by the EEC particularly the one in Chad. The SOEC has been contacted by Equatorial Guinea for support in the preparation of a project to assist in the establishment of a national centre. Other African countries have also shown interest in this field.

49. With regard to improving the quality of staff teaching in national middle-level statistical training programmes, the Meeting requested the secretariat to consider the possibility of financing the exchange of professors between the STPA centres and the national training programmes. It was also proposed that the national programmes should consider how to make their structures viable by alternating the traditional training of middle-level staff with the organisation of refresher or in-service training.

H. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY STPA CENTRES AND NATIONAL STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING PROJECTS (Agenda item 6(c))

50. The introduction of this agenda item was based on document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/5. After reviewing the criteria for selecting the STPA Centres, the initial objective of the STPA and priorities evolved during its implementation were outlined. In spite of the performance rating of STPA Centres and national training programmes to date, there continued to be problems which kept them from full attainment of the set objectives. After describing quickly some of the problems faced by STPA Centres, the on-going national training programmes and the affiliated national institutions for training middle-level statisticians, participants, especially representatives of training centres and programmes, were requested to provide full information to complete that presently available to the secretariat in this area.

51. During the ensuing debate, it was noted that most of the problems currently encountered by the STPA Centres and national statistical training programmes had a common origin namely, lack of funds. A fresh appeal was therefore made to bilateral and multilateral aid organizations to provide the training centres and programmes with adequate resources to enable them to achieve the main objectives of STPA. It was also suggested that (i) Centres better staffed with qualified and experienced lecturers should allow the less better staffed to benefit from their experience through staff exchange programmes and that (ii) flexible measures should be taken to ensure that lecturers sent on training of trainers courses returned to their Centres on completion of their training. Some Centres pointed out that the lack of teaching materials, especially computer equipment, was their major problem. The Meeting expressed the hope that donor organizations would provide those Centres with the required materials to enable them to become fully operational.

52. With regard to the problem confronting the regional STPA Centres, the RIPS representative informed the meeting of the decision of the UNFPA to gradually phase out its financial support to IFORD and RIPS in order that African member countries could take over the responsibilities of these centres. Unfortunately this decision has come at a time when most of the African countries are facing very severe economic crisis and are therefore not in a position to support the regional centres. He informed the meeting that a number of new national projects are being sponsored which duplicate the role of high level manpower training of the two regional Institutes. He suggested the need to appeal to donor agencies to ensure that the meagre resources available for supporting the STPA centres were not being used in establishing national projects that duplicate the roles of the regional STPA centres.

53. The Meeting considered at length the problem of trained statisticians leaving in search of more remunerative jobs. This was not considered as a loss as such but statistical training centres were encouraged to intensify their efforts in turning-out as many more trained staff as possible. Some participants felt that national Governments should strive to give a special status to statisticians in national civil services. That would mean providing such allowances and fringe benefits as would enable their services to be retained.

54. The representative of ENSEA, Abidjan, informed the Meeting of the difficulties facing his Centre's new programme for training Ingénieurs statisticiens économistes (ISEs). Those difficulties were of two types. The first was the lack of the requisite favourable environment for lecturers and students alike reflected in the lack of adequate scientific textbooks and the fact that some of the teaching staff members were too young and inexperienced. The interim solution planned for the latter problem was to appeal to experienced professors to come to the Centre as visiting lecturers. For this year some lecture handouts had been sent by ENSAE/CESD-Paris.

55. The representative of the United Nations Statistical Office proposed that the public should be aware of what statisticians can do in order to reduce unemployment among trained statisticians. With regard to the training of trainers, he informed the Meeting of a UNDP-financed training centre in India which could train trainers for STPA centres in three areas namely surveys, national accounts and agricultural statistics. The Meeting took note of this new opportunity open to English-speaking STPA centres for training their trainers and recommended that the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development should provide fellowships for that purpose. A request had been submitted to UNESCO to help identify a similar institution in France to train trainers for the French-speaking centres.

56. Participants expressed the hope that associate STPA centres would increase the organisation of short courses, in Africa, in specialized areas, for the benefit of STPA teaching staff as had been done by the Munich Centre which had already conducted activities in that regard.

I. PROPOSAL ON CREATING AND STRENGTHENING OF A STATISTICS TEACHING GROUP (Agenda item 6(d))

57. The secretariat introduced the agenda item on the basis of document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/6 "Creating and strengthening a statistics teaching group" and explained that it was prepared by Professor R.M. Loynes of the Department of Probability and Statistics, University of Sheffield, United Kingdom under a consultancy with ECA. The preparation of the draft document was recommended at the fifth meeting of Directors of STPA centres in 1987. In order to take into account the education systems of the Anglophone and Francophone Africa, arrangements were made by ECA for Professor Loynes to be in consultation with Mr. Lamine Diop, Director of CESD-Paris both in the preparation of the outline and the finalisation of the draft document.

58 The secretariat briefly discussed the objectives of such document, the target readership and the definition of a "teaching group". Participants were requested to examine the document fully and to make suggestions which would lead to its improvement at the time of finalising it for dissemination to users.

59. In the discussion that followed participants made specific and general comments on the document. It was stated that the situation described in the document was more or less what prevailed at some training institutions. The document addressed aspects of a teaching group in general, most of which could be adapted to specific situations. Inclusion of STPA centres experiences could help to enrich the document. One participant stated that the document failed to take into account some aspects of the French system.

60. One participant gave the experience of his centre regarding aspects covered in the document such as administrative arrangements, research committee, collaboration with the national statistical office, membership to professional societies, teaching programmes, reporting system, rolling plans, collaborative research, etc. Another participant indicated that some of the statements made in the document did not appear to be realistic, hence there was need for refinning them. Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 31, 43, 64 needed to be examined carefully.

61. It was mentioned that objectives which are stated beginning with paragraph 16 of the document needed to be expanded to include the number of students to be trained, for how long, why and the significance of the training. On the concent of the teaching programme, specific broad topics in mathematics, English language, etc. should be mentioned. The usefulness of subjects such as operational research was questioned. With respect to the exposure of basic sciences to the students, this appears to have been omitted in the document.

62. On reporting, one participant stated that the preparation of an annual report which reflects on failures and successes of a teaching group is important and should be made available to an Advisory Committee of the teaching group. A policy committee was seen to be more of an interference to the activities of the group, the creation of a policy and Advisory Committee was said to be more useful.

63. One participant stated that in paragraph 18c, there is need for guidance on what the teaching group should do in a situation where an unqualified student is recommended for admission by his/her employee. In paragraph 20, on consultancies, there is need for guidelines on what the statistician should do particularly in the situation where most people do not know what a statistician can do and also in the case where the private sector is still small and not fully developed as is the case in most African countries. Guidelines are needed on how to promote consultancies.

64. Concerning promotion of individuals (paragraph 46), at some institutions, this is not in the hands of the teaching group. Individual members of the group have to apply to e.g. appointments board to enable consideration. There is need to elaborate on this issue a bit more in the document.

65. Finally the meeting recommended that the document should be disseminated widely. The secretariat was therefore requested to get the document finalised in the light of the comments made by the participants at this meeting and to disseminate it widely.

J. PREPARATION OF SYLLABUSES AND TEACHING MATERIALS (Agenda item 7(a))

66. The secretariat introduced the agenda item on the basis of document ECA/STAT/DN.6-STPA/89/7. The introductory statement dealt with the preparation of syllabuses and the preparation of teaching materials. On the preparation of syllabuses, the ECA guide syllabuses, their use at STPA centres in the preparation or modification of syllabuses was mentioned. Issues on the preparation of teaching materials, the need, preparation, development and dissemination of such materials were summarized.

67. In the discussion that followed a participant summarized the importance of the guide syllabuses to be as follows: promotion of the acceptance, satisfaction and co-operation of users, enabling a smooth graded and progressive development of deserving employees from the certificate and diploma level and finally to degree level, standardize and concretely define the idea of certificate and diploma programmes in statistics in Africa and facilitation of students own ambitions for further training at high level in Africa and abroad.

68. The experience of a middle level training centre regarding the preparation of teaching materials was provided. Lecturers of various courses are required to provide a cyclostyled copy of their lecture notes. Apart from mathematics all other materials had been prepared and some of these teaching materials were sent to ECA. One participant wanted to know whether ECA has disseminated these materials. The secretariat informed the meeting that all endevours will be made to produce and disseminate some of the good teaching materials within its means. The secretariat appealed to all STPA centres to continue sending these teaching materials to enable ECA better respond to requests received on teaching materials.

69. The CESD-Paris representative informed the participants of the existence of a computer software package known as "PISOPERA" which was developed at his centre for analysis of survey data. This software can be used on all compatible micro-computers. STPA centres and others willing to request the package can do so by writing to CESD-Paris.

70. A view was expressed by a participant that the guide syllabuses are good and useful to new centres but not for centres which have been in existence for over 10 years. The secretariat explained that the guide syllabuses are useful to both new and old centres. The guide syllabuses can be used to improve the contents of a syllabus, during syllabus reviews this guide syllabus could prove handy. The preparation of syllabuses for short courses could also be facilitated by the guide syllabus.

71. Some participants mentioned that while the guide syllabuses were being adapted to country situations and adopted at some training centres, standardization of the level and content of statistical qualifications was more difficult to achieve since there was no mechanism to enforce the use of these guide syllabuses. A suggestion to create a body to monitor the standardization of qualifications was made. The secretariat informed the meeting that through evaluation surveys it is possible to measure the extent of standardization of the level and content of qualifications. The idea of a body to monitor the standardization of qualifications did not therefore arise.

72. Some participants mentioned that they found the guide syllabus useful in the revision of courses in the teaching programmes of their centres. The heavy teaching workload of the staff is a hindrance to the development of teaching materials. Twinning of centres was seen as one way of promoting the development of teaching materials. In this connection donor support is greatly required to assist SSPA centres develop teaching materials.

73. Information was provided by the representative of the UN Statistical Office that it is providing full support to the International Statistical Institute (ISI) project on the use of video in teaching statistics. Pilot studies have been conducted at EASTC and possibly at the Department of Statistics, University of Ibadan. The EASTC representative informed the meeting that the pilot study was conducted at his centre.

74. One participant mentioned that technical reference materials of the UN agencies are hard to find at times. The secretariat explained that these publications are generally available at the UN Headquarters for dissemination to users. If participants have specific difficulties in obtaining these UN publications, kindly write to ECA for assistance. Concerning the translation of teaching materials into English or French, participants wanted to know if ECA could undertake this task. In view of the financial implications the secretariat informed the meeting that it is not possible to undertake such language translations.

75. The secretariat informed the meeting that it could assist in dissemination to other SSPA centres, better examples of teaching materials. Further, the secretariat appealed to SSPA centres to take the initiative to demonstrate that they can produce these teaching materials. Donors are likely to assist as soon as they realise that the centres are serious about the production of teaching materials.

K. REVISION OF THE GUIDE SYLLABUSES FOR MIDDLE LEVEL PERSONNEL IN STATISTICS (Agenda item 7(b))

76. Three documents were introduced on this agenda item. The first document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/2 was introduced by the secretariat while document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/8a was introduced by Dr. Olajide Abe, ECA consultant from the Department of Statistics, Ibadan University and document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/8b was introduced by Mr. Ousmane Balde, ECA consultant from ENSEA, Abidjan.

77. The secretariat informed the meeting that the revision of the guide syllabuses was being undertaken in fulfilment of the recommendation made at the fifth meeting of Directors of STPA centres that these guide syllabuses should be revised every five years from the date they were prepared or last reviewed in order to take into account new developments. The two consultants were therefore recruited to undertake the revision of the two guide syllabuses. The terms of reference of the two consultants and the broad objectives of the guide syllabus were summarized. Mention was made of the documents and materials which were made available by the secretariat to the two consultants in their preparation of the revisions.

78. Mr. Ousman Balde introduced document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/8b by stating that the syllabus to be revised had been presented to the Second Meeting of Directors of STPA Centres in 1981. It had been amended, subsequently updated and published by ECA in May 1982. The current version of the revised guide syllabus takes into account all the recommendations adopted by the various Meetings of Directors of STPA centres and the two seminars held in Abidjan in January 1987 and October 1988.

79. Before presenting the proposals on the syllabus, the aims of the study, the importance of the guide syllabuses and the need for their periodic revision were recalled briefly in an introduction. Then a general view point on the in-service training of middle level statistical personnel as well as a comparative analysis of the various training courses were given. The presentation of the syllabus itself started with an analysis of the functions of a statistician.

80. Then at each training level (certificate, diploma) the basic ideas of the syllabus and its general objectives were defined pursuant to the recommendations of the two seminars held in Abidjan. Following this was the presentation at each level of the course and its contents; the content of each course being preceded by a clear definition of the course objectives and its link with the other courses. Finally, the revised document ended with some bibliographical notes and annexes.

81. Dr. Olajide Abe introduced document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/8a by stating that the aims and objectives of the revised guide syllabuses remain unchanged, the contents are enhanced and modified along well stated lines. The thinking that went into the modifications emanated from a detailed comparative study of existing syllabuses and an analysis of returns of a questionnaire sent to STPA centres soliciting for the aspects of the syllabuses to be modified and how they should be modified. The response to the said questionnaire was low.

02. The basic modifications generally consist of spelling out of the objectives of each course and a more detailed description of the course contents; redistribution of time among the subjects on the basis of two semesters per session each one having 15 teaching weeks or a session of three terms each having ten weeks of teaching, categorization of the subjects into compulsory, required and the electives; allocation of units based on time allocation to each course; the place and use of drills, assignments, practicals and field project, the need for continuous assessment and a method of final assessments.

03. As for the course contents, efforts have been made to be more detailed in their description and the following major changes have been made. Introduction of computer programming at both certificate and diploma levels at least as an elective course. A knowledge of computing in this day and age is fast becoming a sine-qua-non; introduction of French, again as an elective to provide a bridge in communication gap and enable those who take the course read elementary French texts in statistics, economics etc.; introduction of basic sociology to help field members who have to deal with people; complex numbers is not exactly useless to statistics at all stages but virtually all respondents to the questionnaire mentioned earlier panted it off. It has been left out not merely to bow down to pressure but because it is felt that statistics up to diploma level can be taught and learnt without a knowledge of complex numbers; practical mathematics has been dropped and its time has been added to that of Practical Statistics; and a limit has been placed on how many of the topics in applied statistics can be taken in any one year. For more background knowledge on this document, attention is called to two other documents in the possession of ECA, one on the review of current STPA centres' syllabuses and the other on the evaluation of the responses to a questionnaire sent to STPA centres.

04. In the discussion that followed participants commented on subjects, topics and other aspects of the draft revised guide syllabuses which would help to finalise the document. Specific and general comments were provided. Participants were also requested to submit in writing their individual observations to enable the secretariat and the consultants to take into account properly their comments. A summary of the comment submitted during the discussion of this agenda item is given below.

05. Concerning the coverage of subjects in the draft revised guide syllabuses mention was made of English and French languages. The inclusion of "national accounts course at the diploma level was said to be useful. The level of mathematics, statistical inference and probability in the English-speaking guide syllabus were said to be too high for this level of training. Probability theory was also thought not to be important at the certificate level and should be deleted. Others felt that it was relevant and not too much. It was proposed that calculus should be removed in the syllabus, the possible use of matrix algebra was questioned. The inclusion of complex numbers in the topics of the syllabus was debated by several participants particularly regarding the usefulness of the theory of complex numbers to the students. Others felt that some knowledge of complex numbers would be useful at the later stage of training of the middle level staff. It was felt by some participants that at this level of training emphasis should be on methodology rather than theory per se.

86. Statistical data processing was generally viewed to be useful to include in the guide syllabus. The practical side of computing should however be emphasized including appreciation of micro-computers, use of software packages such as spreadsheet, wordprocessing, lotus 1.2.3, etc. should be taught before computer programming. One or two high level languages such as FORTRAN or COBOL should be introduced at this level of training.

87. A participant expressed concern on the course load and programme feasibility particularly relating to number of lecture and practical hours per week at the certificate and diploma level in the English-speaking revised guide syllabus which are 29 and 30 respectively. In view of other activities which the students have to attend to, it was suggested that these be brought down to no more than 22 for each of the levels.

88. Regarding the reading list included in the English-speaking guide syllabus participants were happy to see references to teaching materials in the form of books produced by African authors. The dates and/or editions of the publications were missing for some of these publications. There was a clear missing gap of vital publications in applied statistics produced by the United Nations and other international agencies, these should be considered for inclusion. Some participants felt that there was need to carefully review, update and enlarge the reading list.

89. On the assessment of trainees, depending on the system adopted at each training centre, it was envisaged that in the English-speaking training centres there will be a middle-of-course examination and an end-of-course examination in each subject. The question of how much weight to give to the middle-of-course examination, the assignments, the practicals and end-of-course examination in the final assessment was arguable. A 60:40 weighting was suggested for final and continuous assessment respecively.

90. The World Bank representative indicated that in view of the structural adjustment programmes being emphasized in the African countries, the guide syllabus should include topics on analysis of income distribution (target, poverty indicies, etc.). Topics on survey management should also be included. He felt that one guide syllabus for Africa with annexes for each language group to take account of the academic differences would be more useful.

91. On applied statistics, it was felt by some participants that in view of the importance of the agricultural sector in Africa the inclusion of agricultural statistics in the syllabus ought to be emphasized particularly at the diploma level where it was not so clearly stated in the English-speaking syllabus.

92. A participant raised the issue of what motivates the revision of such a syllabus. In response it was explained that for such a guide syllabus it is necessary to define the main courses to be emphasized and to focus on issues relevant to the development of statistics in Africa. The role and objectives of each teaching course should be defined in the syllabus to enable the teachers become more aware of the usefulness on the course and to focus on relevant topics.

93. Some participants felt that the differences between the old and new guide syllabus were not clearly spelt out. It was explained that there were separate analysis undertaken by the consultants on this of which the documents were available in the secretariat.

94. Concerning the ordering of topics in subjects such as maths in the diploma level of the English-speaking guide syllabus, participants were of the view that it will depend on teachers to decide on the best way of presentation.

95. Some participants wanted to know the documents on which the revision was based. It was explained that some of the documents are listed on page 55 of the French-speaking guide syllabus. The secretariat explained that in document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/8 for this item of the agenda, paragraph 9 provides a list of some of the documents which the secretariat made available to the consultants for them to study before preparing the revision of the guide syllabus.

96. In conclusion the secretariat congratulated the two consultants for the excellent job performed in preparing the revised guide syllabuses and appreciated the comments made by the participants which would enable both consultants to finalise the documents in collaboration with the secretariat. The documents would be finalised for dissemination to users and interested individuals.

L. PROGRESS IN THE ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICAL TRAINING (Agenda item 8)

97. Under this agenda item, the secretariat introduced document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/9 which revealed the main activities conducted as part of the project on special assistance to Portuguese-speaking African countries in the field of statistical training, particularly since the First Meeting of Directors of STPA Centres. A joint EEC/ECA/Portugal mission was undertaken to Guinea-Bissau in November 1987 in order to discuss with the authorities of that country the prior arrangements that needed to be made towards the opening within the administrative training centre (CENFA) of Bissau a section for training middle-level statistical personnel (certificate and diploma). That section would admit nationals of Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe.

98. Furthermore, a meeting had been organized jointly by EEC and ECA in Luxembourg during February 1988 with a view to reviewing the guide syllabuses for training middle-level statistical personnel. The syllabuses had been prepared by ECA with the assistance of a Portuguese consultant and were adapted to the needs of countries in that group. The Luxembourg meeting had also considered practical ways of implementing the project for the establishment of the Bissau Centre for the training of middle-level statistical personnel and the opening of the national higher institute for applied statistics (INSSA) in Lisbon, Portugal. Within that institute would be set up CESD-Lisbon for the training of professional statistical personnel for Portuguese-speaking African countries. Yet another meeting had been organized jointly by EEC and Portugal in Lisbon during November 1988 to consider the status of the proposed establishment of INSSA, its structure, syllabuses and admission requirements as well as the status of the project for the establishment of the Bissau Centre. The secretariat had found that positive action had been taken over the past two years and that proper arrangements seemed to have been made towards the opening in 1990 of the two centres at Bissau and Lisbon.

99. The representative of the national statistical institute (INE), Portugal, provided additional information on the project for the establishment of the Lisbon Centre. He first informed participants that in April 1989, Legislative Act 6/89 on the national statistical system and the decree 280/89 dated 23 August on the new statute of INE conferring to it technical autonomy among others. Article 14 of the Act stipulated that INE should work in concert with university and higher educational institutions to formulate training programmes in theoretical and applied statistics for public administration and enterprise staff and mainly for national statistical system staff and endeavour to conduct co-operation activities (particularly with Portuguese-speaking African countries) in the training of professional level statisticians. He went on to inform the Meeting that on 30 November 1989, Legislative Decree No. 417/89 on the establishment of the higher institute for statistical information and management (ISEGI) had been adopted. ISEGI was the official acronym of the national centre which will accomodate CESD-Lisbon.

100. The representative of INE went on to describe briefly the status of the European Statistical Centre for Developing Countries referred to as CESD-Lisbon. The statutes of the Centre is scheduled to be signed in January 1990 in the presence of the founding members. ECA was an active member. He also provided information on the diplomas to be awarded by ISEGI and CESD-Lisbon, namely the higher diploma in statistical design (CSCS) which would be equivalent to the advanced diploma (DEA) in the French system, and the higher diploma in applied statistics (CSAS), which would be equivalent to a masters' degree. He hoped that Portuguese-speaking African countries should, as soon as possible, submit candidatures for the post of director of CESD-Lisbon. The competitive exam for the admission of students would take place in March/April 1990 and the Centre should be opened in October/November 1990. The opening of ISEGI and CESD-Lisbon will take place in October/November 1990.

101. The representative of Sao Tome and Principe observed that, according to schedule, the Bissau Centre should have opened the department for the training of statistical technicians at the certificate level in October 1988 for nationals of Guinea-Bissau alone. The department for the training of middle-level statisticians (diploma level) was to be opened in October 1990 from which date nationals of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe would also be admitted. In view of the delay encountered, she wondered whether every arrangement would have been concluded for the Centre to open in 1990. Concerning the nomination of a candidate for the post of Director of CESD-Lisbon, she indicated that the issue would be considered with the other countries of the group. Reacting to a secretariat request, she stated that the project on the establishment of a national programme for the training of professional statisticians, as formulated with the assistance of an ECA mission, had been delayed for financial reasons. The problem was, however, being resolved within the context of an integrated statistical development project.

102. The representative of the Commission of the European Communities informed the Meeting that two official requests from the Government of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde concerning the establishment of the Bissau Centre had been received in Brussels and the process of securing approval of the project, by the Director-General responsible for development, was underway. For the moment, the management of the project in an amount of ECU 300,000 will be ensured by

"CESD-Communautaire". As soon as CESD-Lisbon became operational, it would take over the project. The representative of SOEC stated that the project included a two-year technical assistance component which provided for a counterpart from Guinea Bissau and support in the form of teaching materials and equipment.

103. The representative of CESD-Paris informed the Meeting that following the extraordinary general assembly meeting held in May 1989, his organization was henceforth to be known as CESD-Paris. The idea was to draw distinction between CESD-Lisbon and the Community CESD in Luxembourg. He indicated that his organization trained nationals of developing countries in general even though most of the students came from the Africa region.

104. In response to a question raised by one participant, the secretariat indicated that the selection of Lisbon as the location of the centre which would provide advanced training to Portuguese-speaking African countries had been based on the concern for making economic use of resources, especially since the centre would operate within the higher institute for statistical information and management of Portugal. What was more, the effectiveness of such a solution had been demonstrated with the establishment in 1962 of CESD in Paris within the Ecole nationale de la statistique et de l'administration économique (ENSEA), France which trained senior statisticians for developing countries. The representative of CESD-Paris added that in that regard, Africans should be made to benefit from the structures existing in Europe and other developed countries which provided a good standard of training. Eventually, such training could be transferred to Africa as has been done in 1970 with the training of ingénieurs des travaux statistiques (ITS) which used to be provided by CESD.

105. In response to another question, the representative of IHE indicated that in addition to the nomination of an African Director planned in the statute of CESD-Lisbon, the possibility of recruiting foreign consultants, including Africans, who had the qualifications and competence required to teach at the Centre was also planned in the statute of ISEGI.

106. Some participants commented that Guinea-Bissau should have been invited to the current Meeting to provide updated information on the status of the project for the establishment of the Bissau Centre. The secretariat replied that Guinea-Bissau had been invited to the Fifth Meeting of Directors of STPA centres as a representative of user countries but that, currently, the invitation had been addressed to Sao Tome and Principe. Nevertheless, arrangements would be made so that Guinea-Bissau could attend the subsequent meeting.

107. Concluding the discussions on this agenda item, participants expressed satisfaction with the news that CESD-Lisbon would be opened in 1990 to train high level statisticians for the Portuguese-speaking African countries. They hoped that the official requests submitted to the EEC by the Governments of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde on the establishment of a middle-level statistical training centre for countries of the group would be considered favourably and speedily and that appropriate steps would be taken by the various parties involved with a view to opening that Centre in October 1990.

108. Finally, participants expressed their appreciation to all bilateral and multilateral organizations and institutions which had rendered invaluable assistance towards the implementation of the project of special assistance to Portuguese-speaking African countries. Portugal, the EEC, ECA and UNFPA were singled out in this regard and it was hoped that they would continue and further intensify such assistance.

II. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICAL TRAINING (Agenda item 9)

(i) United Nations (Agenda item 9(a))

109. Representatives of various United Nations agencies took turns in describing the technical and financial assistance provided by their organizations to the development of statistical training in the African region.

110. The representative of the United Nations Statistical Office introduced document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/10(a) on Technical Assistance for Statistical Training in Africa by the United Nations (1987-1988). It was noted that as a general rule, the United Nations Statistical Office provided the necessary backstopping for statistical training projects implemented by the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD). He described the various ways in which the United Nations provide such assistance, which generally was assigned as part of the technical co-operation projects prepared within the countries. Cases in point were the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP), the Software Development Project, special projects financed under the regular budget of DTCD and those Special Training Projects to conduct in-depth and in-service statistical training programmes for Africa South of the Sahara. United Nations activities in the training of nationals from Portuguese-speaking African countries were mentioned along with in-service trainer training activities conducted at STPA Centres.

111. In the ensuing discussions, it was proposed that the ECA Statistics Division, together with the United Nations Statistical Office, should monitor how the training of trainees was carried out at the STPA Centres.

112. ECA's technical and financial assistance in the field of statistical training was described in document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/10(b). Such assistance had been provided through consultative missions fielded by statistical training advisers in order to set up and/or strengthen national statistical training programmes, the attendance of meetings of the Governing Councils of certain STPA Centres by those advisers, teaching missions undertaken by the advisers as well as by other staff members of the ECA Statistics Division, the recruitment of lecturers and consultants for STPA Centres, the award of trainer-training fellowships and those activities conducted as part of the assistance rendered to Portuguese-speaking African countries. It was also indicated that, at the recommendation of UNDP, ECA's statistical training advisers had participated in the activities of the World Bank project on the collection of data relating to development programmes and aid flows in Africa. They had, among other things,

undertaken 14 missions to African countries. Information was also provided on ECA's assistance in terms of training under the UNFPA financed regional advisory service project in demographic statistics.

113. In the discussion that followed, the Meeting commended the intensity of the secretariat's activities to promote statistical training in the region. Clarification was provided on the conditions under which trainer-training fellowships were awarded and lecturers/consultants provided to STPA Centres.

114. The representative of UNESCO informed the Meeting about training activities undertaken in Africa as part of educational, scientific, cultural and communications programmes. Those activities, financed under the UNESCO regular budget and from such extra-budgetary sources as the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), had covered a number of African countries within which national and sub-regional training programmes had been organized.

115. He drew the attention of the Meeting to the fact that in UNESCO's programme budget for 1990-1991 (which had recently been approved by the General Conference of his organization) there had been a substantial increase in the allocation made for statistics. It meant that more significant activities would be conducted in those training programme areas under UNESCO's jurisdiction and for which the needs were considerable, most particularly in Africa. Along with that, donor agencies were currently considering a project for strengthening national statistical offices in the field of education. The project provided for the training of national statistical personnel and for the participation of research centres and institutions in survey and research activities covering specialized areas.

116. A representative of the World Bank stated that IBRD was providing projects support to the national statistical offices of certain countries and strengthening their capabilities through training and technical assistance. The Economic Development Institute (EDI) of the World Bank was providing training opportunities in economic management in general and in sectoral development. The project on the assessment of the social dimensions of structural adjustment in sub-Saharan Africa (SDA) was intended to work out a system of national information and to strengthen the capability of national statistical offices in data collection and analysis. The World Bank would like to explore other means of co-operation with some STPA Centres in the implementation of regional training activities within the context of the SDA programme.

117. The representative of FAO indicated that, before the general census in agriculture, which takes place every ten years, FAO organizes some demonstration centres for staff in charge of the implementation of the agricultural census in their country. In that respect, in view of the 1990 agricultural census, a demonstration took place recently in Rabat, Morocco for the French-speaking countries, and another is being held in Somalia for English-speaking countries. FAO also ensures on-the-job training through projects implemented in the field of agricultural statistics and census. Also some FAO staff give lectures in agricultural statistics at some national agricultural statistics training centres.

(ii) EEC Technical and financial assistance to STPA (Agenda item 9(b))

118. This item was introduced by a representative of the Statistical Office of the European Communities based on document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/10(c) on EEC's Financial and Technical Assistance in the Field of Statistical Training in Africa. The various activities that EEC had undertaken to-date on such assistance were briefly summarized. They included (i) activities carried out within the terms of the contract between EEC and the Institute of Statisticians (twinning programmes between European and STPA Centres and provision of teaching materials), study tours and teaching missions; (ii) the simulation exercise known as "Harambee" enabling to initiate the collaboration between producers and users of statistical data; (iii) activities forming part of the transfer of the ISE training programme to Africa; and (iv) EEC assistance in the Africanization of the teaching staff of certain STPA centres in Francophone countries. An ex-post evaluation of the project had been undertaken by EEC. From the conclusions of the evaluation exercise, guidelines had been formulated for the eventual new EEC assistance project to STPA under the proposed Lome IV Convention. the main outlines of the principles under-pinning the activities to be carried out in implementation of the new projects were specified. They included: (i) the continuation of those activities deemed to have achieved positive results under the former project; (ii) the initiation of new activities; (iii) the focusing of efforts on the promotion of regional centres; (iv) the promotion of closer co-operation among STPA Centres and those located in Europe; and (v) arrangements for regular evaluation of the project.

119. The representative of the EEC Directorate-General for development (DG VIII) continued the presentation by stating that his office had no specific budget for providing assistance to countries in the form of statistical training fellowships. It was up to countries to rate statistical training as a priority in the national programmes funded by the European Development Fund (EDF). Requests for financing under EDF funds should be introduced by national EDF authorising Officers (in most cases ministers of planning and/or finance). Requests concerning national IPF of the countries should be introduced by the national authorising Officers of the concerned countries. Requests concerning regional EDF funds should be signed by at least two African governments.

(iii) Other bilateral and multilateral agencies and institutions (Agenda item 9(c))

120. Presentations under this agenda item were made on the basis of document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/10(d) and oral statements by representatives of the donor countries and agencies.

121. Assistance from the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) for the period 1987-1990 was estimated at 650,000 pounds sterling. It consisted of the award of 80 fellowships each year for training at centres in the United Kingdom; financing of teaching posts for statistical training at national level and funding for short-term in-country training programmes.

122. Through the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the Government of Sweden provided technical and financial assistance to Africa in the area of statistical training. Four countries, namely Lesotho, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and (in the immediate future) Zambia were receiving such assistance which mainly comprised of on-the-job training, in-service training and training at the national level. The cost of such assistance had been one million US dollars per year per country.

123. The financing of on-going costs of the Munich Centre and of a majority of its operations by the Federal Republic of Germany is an important contribution to statistical training in Africa, EEC financed special activities and projects. The thrust of the activities of the Munich Centre fall in line with the decision made two years previously to cover statistical subjects linked to certain policy priority areas and falling in line within the framework of CEC-ACP. The Centre plans to expand its activities in Africa and in Asia through seminars and workshops. The representative of the Munich Centre informed the Meeting about the work programme for 1989 and 1990. There were three types of activities: Three to four-months training courses or programmes in Munich, one to four-weeks in-country seminars and training seminars for directors of national statistical offices.

124. The Munich Centre started the preparation of training materials which could be used later by African countries themselves and the financing of standard softwares that those countries could use.

125. The International Statistical Programs Center (ISPC), continues to provide assistance to the national statistical offices of developing countries. ISPC has trained about 500 African statisticians and information scientists over the past 40 years. It continues to provide technical assistance and organized workshops in various countries to address the problems encountered by the countries in census-taking and survey activities. ISPC has an on-going programme for the development and support of software packages for census and survey planning, data entry, data editing and data tabulation.

126. ISPC offers certificate and diploma programmes in English and Spanish, laying emphasis on integrated and practical training in census and survey methodology. Most of the trainees are financed by USAID, the UN agencies or by their own Governments.

127. The African Development Bank attached special importance to the funding of multinational projects and programmes. Studies financed by ADB often include statistical components related to project data collection and analysis. The ADB also provides institution building funding and is one of the initiators of SDR projects. The STPA Centres could, through the appropriate channels investigate the possibility of ADB assistance given the fact that they contribute to improving and strengthening the statistical capabilities of the regional member countries of the ADB.

128. Speaking for France, the representative of CESD-Paris described what he knew about the financial support which the Government of France provided for statistical training in Africa. Among other things, CESD-Paris study fellowships were for the most part financed by the Fonds d'Aide et de Cooperation, along with the provision of teachers, under co-operation agreements with France, to certain STPA Centres in Francophone countries. Many activities such as CESD-Paris seminars and pedagogical work days were financed from FAC funds.

129. The Meeting expressed its profound gratitude to all bilateral and multilateral aid agencies for all the activities they conducted and/or planned to undertake to further the development of statistical training in Africa.

130. Its particular appreciation went to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the financial support it continued to provide in aid of the regional component of the STPA within the context of the integrated project "Statistical Development Programme for Africa" (SDPA). The Meeting strongly recommended that such assistance should be considered within the context of the fifth UNDP Programming Cycle for 1992-1996.

N. OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 11)

(i) Directories

131. The secretariat presented two directories, document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/11 and document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/12 and explained that these directories are updated biennially. The Directory of STPA and associate centres was introduced for the first time in its present form in 1985 while the Directory of non-STPA centres was introduced for the first time in 1983 and has since been expanded considerably. Problems concerning updating of the directories resulting from delays in receiving responses from STPA centres and other institutions were stated. With respect to non-STPA centres it was more a question of identifying them. The secretariat appealed to STPA centres and other institution to inform it of the existence of any statistical training centres in Africa which could qualify for inclusion in the Directory of non-STPA centres.

132. The secretariat explained the structure of the directories which contain a maximum of 23 individual entries. The number of associate centres is currently seven. Delays were experienced in the finalisation of the Directory of STPA centres not participating in the STPA but this will be finalised soon. The Department of probability and Statistics of Sheffield University is missing on the cover page of the Directory of STPA and associate centres, this will be corrected in future directories. Participants were requested to continue identification of associate centres particularly those of the French-speaking expression to enable the language group distribution (English and French) of these centres maintain a reasonable balance.

133. In the discussion that followed the representative of National University of Lesotho (NUL) requested that the name of the Director should not be indicated in the directory since at some centres the changes in headship occur frequently. He proposed that instead under this heading should be written "Head of Department". The secretariat explained that it is important that the name of the officer-in-charge of the centre should be indicated. This can facilitate among other things correspondence with the centre.

134. The representative of NUL also corrected information on the numbering of the courses at his centre. He explained that the intake and output information was sent to the ECA but rather late. The secretariat explained that it had received neither the update of the directory nor the student intake and output figures. The secretariat appealed to all STPA, non-STPA centres, etc. to forward on time their corrections or update of the Directory to enable updating now that all centres are aware that these directories are released every two years.

135. The representative of INE stated that he hoped that ISEGI and CESD-Lisbon will request to participate as associate STPA centres when they are fully established next year. He wanted to know if there was a questionnaire to be completed on this type of request. The secretariat stated that the meeting of Directors of STPA centres will be delighted to consider the application of ISEGI and CESD-Lisbon to become associate centres. The secretariat does not have a questionnaire to be completed for this purpose but would be delighted to provide information on how to submit such an application. The criteria for selection of associate centres is detailed in paragraph 3 of document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/13.

136. Regarding the application to become an associate centre by the Institute of Statisticians (IOS), U.K. the secretariat explained that the IOS has lately been in correspondence with the ECA on this matter. It was however late for the centre to submit an application. It is hoped that it will do so at the next meeting of Directors of STPA centres.

(ii) Application to become an associate centre of STPA: Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI), New Delhi, India

137. The secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document ECA/STAT/DM.6-STPA/89/13 and explained the major criteria for selecting associate centres as was defined at the third meeting of Directors of STPA centres. The background to the submission was provided dating back to the first commonwealth workshop on Food Supply Information Systems in Africa held in New Delhi, India in 1986 and the second workshop on Food Supply Information Systems in Africa held in Nairobi, Kenya, March 1988. The New Delhi workshop recommended that a programme of research and experimentation and training should be facilitated by the necessary formal twinning/linkage arrangements between some Indian institutions engaged in this kind of research, experimentation and training and institutions in Africa. The information submitted by the IASRI was detailed in the document.

139. Another participant raised the question of whether there was an upper limit to the number of centres that could be admitted to become associate GSPA centres, what is expected of these centres and if they fail to do what is expected of them whether there are regulations to say that they stop being an associate centre. The secretariat explained that there is no upper limit in the number that can be admitted to become associate centres. The responsibility to admit these centres as associate members of GSPA rests in the meeting of Directors of GSPA centres. It so happens that the admission of these centres is more to the advantage of Africa, the associate centres have great responsibility in training African statisticians. If applications of centres which do not meet the criteria set at the third meeting of Directors of GSPA centres are received then the meeting should feel free to reject their application.

130. On the basis of the information submitted by IASRI, a number of participants stated that it met very adequately the criteria for becoming an associate centre as established at the third meeting of Directors of GSPA centres. They recommended that the centre be admitted to become an associate centre. The meeting on the basis of this recommendation admitted the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute as the eighth associate GSPA centre.

(iii) Information on various CESDs

140. The representative of the Statistical Office of the European Communities provided information on the various CESD which are established within the community. The secretariat requested the CESD representative to submit a short article on the CESDs which the secretariat can publish in the next edition of GSPA News for the benefit of African countries.

(iv) Training of trainers

141. The representative of the National University of Lesotho expressed gratitude to the financial support provided under the GSPA within the framework of the IDSA training of trainers at GSPA centres. He however expressed concern on the fact that fellowships which are granted are limited to a maximum period of two years and for students whose studies last more than two years e.g. doctorate (Ph.D) degrees, this becomes a problem. The students therefore are likely to experience problems to complete their courses particularly if no other donor comes to their rescue. He requested the meeting to reconsider this upper limit of the fellowship period in view of the fact that the limit was recommended by this meeting.

142. The secretariat explained that the available budget of the GSPA for these fellowships is very limited. At the time this decision was taken the idea was to enable as many centres as possible to benefit from these fellowships. At the time of award of the fellowship, the centres are made to understand that the fellowship is for two years maximum, if the studies go beyond two years it is up to the centre to obtain additional funding from other sources to support the trainee. It is therefore important for an GSPA centre to consider the issue of taking up the two year fellowship before doing so particularly if it is clear from the outset that the student will require more than two years to complete the course.

(v) Social Dimensions of Structural Adjustment (SDA) Project

143. The representatives of the World Bank explained the activities of the project as follows: The project was launched in 1987 as a joint venture between the UNDP regional Programme for Africa, African Development Bank and the World Bank. The SDA project has its principal objective to help participating Government in sub-Saharan Africa to integrate social dimensions in the design of structural adjustment programmes and development plans. Twenty seven countries have requested to participate in the project.

144. At the regional level the project unit at the World Bank supports the development of a conceptual, empirical and policy framework to strengthen the foundations of structural adjustment operations aimed at growth with equity. Technical work is organized in four key areas socio-economic and policy analysis, social policy and programmes formulation, surveys and statistics and training. In the area of surveys and statistics the development of a priority survey (light survey) and a community questionnaire are some of the activities. In the area of training, a training task force has been established and has met twice at the Munich Centre, ECA has participated at both workshops. A regional training programme has been developed as a result of this task force. The mobilization of donor support is another activity of the SDA. These donors finance project costs at the country level. Joint missions are organized with donors, UN agencies, etc.

145. At the country level SDA supports the development and implementation of a country operational agenda. The objective of a national SDA project is to promote macro-economic and sectoral policy planning and management in the country, implementation of social action programmes and development of country institutions. In the 27 African countries, 14 country projects have been appraised. The World Bank is concerned about the sustainability of the projects and the recurrent cost implication to the African governments. This project is an opportunity for development of statistics in Africa. Countries are likely to become aware of the importance of statistics.

146. The World Bank officials stated that training occupies a special place in the SDA. The gathering of data is an important aspect of the SDA. National Statistical Offices should be in a position to carry out household surveys and to analyse them. The World Bank has developed a training programme whose target audience are those officials of the various government ministries and departments involved in SDA projects. As far as statistics is concerned there are three categories of personnel, the statisticians, computer scientists, field personnel which includes supervisors, enumerators and anthropometrists.

147. To enable the SDA training programmes to succeed there is need to strengthen African statistical training institutions. Promotion of twinning/linkage of African institutions with those outside Africa will be one way of strengthening the centres.

148. In the discussion that followed participants raised several issues about the SDA concerning the need for statistical data, issues of poverty in Africa, representation of the poor in governments, whether SDA at the country level operates on loan or grants.

149. On the need for data, the World Bank representative said that his organization had realised even before the SDA project, the need for statistical data. The aim now is to improve the capacities of the countries in data collection. Concerning poverty, the World Bank is aware that this is a way of life for many people, the SDA is an attempt to correct the situation in one way or another. The question of representation of the poor in government is up to the individual governments to decide. World Bank encourages the use of local non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and also international NGOs in SDA projects. Regarding the actions of the World Bank at the country level, most times, it does not wait for data to be available for actions to be initiated, the data will simply confirm those in the poverty group more concretely. Regarding loans or grants at the country level the World Bank generally tries to raise grants or soft loans. Hard loans are avoided whenever possible.

150. Concerning the preparation of projects at the country level, the World Bank representative explained that generally the SDA policy agenda serves as a guide for country activities. A flexible and pragmatic approach is used. Projects are prepared to cover one or more of the components of the SDA policy agenda which might include macro and sectoral policy management, social action programme and projects, institutional building and training to strengthen national information systems.

151. On training the World Bank representative mentioned that several training programmes are intended to bridge the gap between producers and users of data. Annual seminars and workshops will be undertaken to achieve this.

152. One participant stated that the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) tended to raise the expectation of the people too high and it is very disappointing when they discover that the miracles could not be produced. He requested that SAP should minimise in advance the raising of hopes. The World Bank representative agreed that there was need to be as much realistic as possible and that various techniques should be used at the country level to ensure that the beneficiaries of the SAP are not disappointed at the final analysis should things not work out the way they are expected.

(vi) Seventh meeting of Directors of centres participating in the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)

153. One participant made a proposal that the seventh meeting of Directors of STPA centres should be hosted by one of the STPA centres. In response to the proposal the secretariat explained the ECA regulations concerning the hosting of meetings outside the ECA headquarters. In particular he mentioned the financial implications on the country or centre requesting to host the meeting. In the absence of a centre offering to host the meeting, the secretariat suggested that the matter should be left to it to survey the possibility of holding the meeting in another country.

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Annex

EVALUATION OF THE MEETING

Overall the completed twenty-four evaluation questionnaires indicate that all the participants were satisfied with the administrative organization of the meeting. However, some participants felt that slight reductions could be made on the working hours, mainly for the afternoon sessions by introducing a fifteen minutes coffee/tea break. Three participants felt that the overall administrative arrangements were in general fair.

On the topics for the meeting and the discussions which took place, the great majority of the participants felt that the topics were fairly relevant and their introduction clear throughout. Half of the participants indicated that the discussions were practically oriented while the other half thought that the discussions covered a good balance of theory and applications.

On the topics which participants would have liked to be included in the agenda, the following suggestions were made:

- Evaluation of STPA through the evaluation of National Statistical Offices productions.
- Planning co-ordination among donor agencies.
- Comparative study on non-STPA centres.
- Sectoral statistics.

With respect to the documentation for the meeting, all the participants indicated that they were sufficient; more than half of the participants felt that they were very clear, while the other half found them reasonable. The time allowed for questions and discussion was felt sufficient by all the participants in the meeting. With respect to the contribution of the participants in the overall STPA programme, the majority of them felt that their contribution would be more than before; only five participants indicated that it would be at the same level as before.

All the participants recognized the main objective of the meeting which is "to discuss statistical training and statistical development in Africa and to provide guidance on the future development of STPA", had been achieved. Three quarters of the participants indicated that this sixth meeting of Directors of STPA centres has been very relevant to the training activities of their institutions.

Finally, some participants, mainly delegates from STPA centres and user countries, indicated the following among the greatest problems expected in putting into practice the recommendations of the meeting:

a) Improvement of research activities

- Lack of financial support for research activities;
- Lack of equipment (micro-computer, scientific data papers, vehicles....);
- Lack of staffing
- Lack of adequate means of communication and co-ordination;
- Difficulty in identifying viable research projects.

b) In-service statistical training/middle level statistical training at national level

- Lack of finance and qualified personnel;
- Educational level of the staff attending the in-service training;
- Lack of funding to send some trainers from the SCPS centres to assist countries implementing national statistical training programmes;
- Lack of teaching materials;
- Lack of motivation on the importance of the in-service training.

c) Preparation of syllabuses and teaching materials

- Lack of funding for reproduction and publication;
- Lack of computing material;
- Lack of sufficient time for the elaboration of teaching materials;
- Syllabuses and teaching materials of the courses ought to conform to the general requirements of the university.

d) Statistical organisation and staffing of national statistical offices

- Lack of control over the staffing situation
- Greatest mobility of personnel
- Lack of training fellowships and funding
- Low level of salaries not attractive to high level and experienced personnel hence difficult to retain them.

On the suggestions for the improvement of the organization and conduct of future meetings of this kind, some participants indicated the following:

- Emphasis should be made on the organizational matters (meeting and accommodation);

- Shorter presentation of the agenda items by the secretariat;

- Longer discussions oriented to exchange of experiences;

- Put emphasis onduring the meeting on exchange of experiences among the centres;

- Greater representation of national stacistical offices at the meeting;

- Discussions should be better organized and avoid listing the speakers after the introduction by the secretariat;

- Background documents should be disseminated well in advance.